

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 USIA-06 DHA-02 ORM-02 IO-13 /077 W

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FM AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3055

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SCUL, PINT, PFOR, UR, US

SUBJ: NEGATIVE PRESS TREATMENT OF LENINGRAD ORCHESTRA  
VISIT TO U.S.

REF: MOSCOW 4187

1. A MARCH 27 LENINGRADSKAYA PRAVDA ARTICLE ON THE RECENT CULTURAL VISIT OF THE LENINGRAD PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA TO THE U.S. INDICATES THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE NOT DECLARED A MORATORIUM, DURING THE VISIT OF SECRETARY OF STATE VANCE, IN THE CURRENT CAMPAIGN OF PARTICULARLY NASTY PORTRAYALS OF U.S. SOCIETY. THE ARTICLE, ENTITLED "AMERICA AS WE SAW HER", WAS WRITTEN BY LENCONCERT DIRECTOR K. SADOVNIKOV, WHO HEADED UP THE RECENT TOUR TO THE STATES. IT IS THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE ARTICLE WHICH WE HAVE SEEN ON THE LENINGRAD ORCHESTRA'S TOUR TO WASHINGTON, NEW YORK, CHICAGO AND THE UNIVERSITY CITIES OF THE NORTH WEST, ALTHOUGH A  
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NUMBER OF SHORT, EFFUSIVE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE ORCHESTRA'S RECEPTION AND SUCCESSES IN THE U.S. APPEARED HERE DURING AND AFTER THE TOUR.

2. THE L.P. ARTICLE OPENS POSITIVELY WITH A BOW TO THE CORDIAL RECEPTION AND HIGH CRITICAL ACCLAIM ACCORDED THE ORCHESTRA, THE "EXTREMELY HIGH" LEVEL OF

AMERICAN MUSICIANS, AND THE WORLD FAME OF U.S. SYMPHONY ORCHESTRAS. IT QUICKLY DETERIORATES THEREAFTER, HOWEVER, AND MORE THAN TWO-THIRDS OF LENGTHY ARTICLE IS DEVOTED TO A HIGHLY CRITICAL ACCOUNT OF U.S. SOCIETY, SUPPOSEDLY BASED ON PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE ORCHESTRA'S MEMBERS. THE ACCOUNT REHASHES THE FAMILIAR NEGATIVE PORTRAYAL OF LIFE IN THE U.S., INCLUDING THE ALLEGED POPULAR CULTURAL VULGARITIES, HIGH CRIME RATE, UNSAFE CITIES, WIDE-SPREAD PORNOGRAPHY, SUPPOSED ALIENATION OF POPULATION, SORRY PLIGHT OF PENSIONERS, HIGH COST OF MEDICAL EXPENSES AND RENTS, SHORTCOMINGS OF PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION, CONTINUING INFLATION AND SO FORTH. TO GIVE A FLAVOR OF SOME OF THE MORE EXTREME STATEMENTS, SADOVNIKOV CLAIMS THAT AN AMERICAN PASSERBY, PRESUMABLY REACTING TO THEIR FOREIGN ACCENT, "WENT WHITE AND PASSED OVER A \$20 BILL" WHEN THE SOVIET MUSICIANS MERELY ASKED HIM FOR DIRECTIONS. ON ALIENATION, HE CLAIMS TO HAVE ENCOUNTERED TWO BROTHERS LIVING IN THE SAME STREET WHO HAVEN'T MET FOR ALMOST EIGHT YEARS "BECAUSE THEY HAD NO BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY."

3.UF SADOVNIKOV NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT THE "WORST IMPRESSIONS" WERE IN CONNECTION WITH THE SOVIET MUSICIANS' ENCOUNTERS WITH THEIR COUNTRYMEN WHO HAD EMIGRATED TO THE U.S. THE ARTICLE POINTS UP THE INABILITY OF EMIGREES TO FIND WORK COMMENSURATE WITH THEIR EDUCATION, AND THEIR PENURIOUS STATUS, ISOLATION FROM AMERICANS, PITIFUL HOMESICKNESS, AND REGRET AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EVER HAVING LEFT THE SOVIET UNION.

4. COMMENT: WHILE THIS IS ALL OLD HAT, THE ARTICLE STRIKES US AS PARTICULARLY EXCESSIVE, GIVEN THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL AND INCIDENT-FREE TOUR OF THE LENINGRAD ORCHESTRA IN THE U.S. AND THE OBVIOUS OPPORTUNITY WHICH THE ARTICLE MIGHT HAVE AFFORDED FOR A REASONABLY POSITIVE PITCH ON BEHALF OF CONTINUING CULTURAL EXCHANGES. WE ASSUME THAT IT IS A PUT-UP JOB DESIGNED TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SOVIET FUROR OVER THE RECENT U.S. HIGHLIGHTING OF THE SOVIET UNION'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD CONTINUES, WITH A GRATUITOUS JAB AT EMIGRANTS THROWN IN AND A WARNING TO DISSIDENTS THAT EMIGRATION OFFERS NO CERTAIN WAY OUT. NEUBERT

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## Message Attributes

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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**TAGS:** SCUL, PINT, PFOR, UR, US, LENINGRAD ORCHESTRA  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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